

THE VIRGINIA TEACHER

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Manuscripts offered for publication from those interested in our state educational problems should be addressed to the editors of The Virginia Teacher, State Teachers College, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

ATTRACTIVE GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

The National Bureau of Casualty and Surety Underwriters offers for the academic year 1925-1926 three graduate fellowships of \$1,000 each for the study of special problems in the field of safety education. The subjects are:

1. The grading of subject matter for safety instruction in the elementary schools.
2. The preparation of a course of study in safety education for the use of normal schools, and
3. A study of the relative importance of positive vs. negative methods of instruction.

These fellowships are offered in order to secure expert solutions of problems which confront the education section of the National Safety Council in its work, a work which is also financed by the national bureau. The first problem is that of adapting the subject matter of safety instruction in detail to the needs of the elementary schools; the second is the general problem of organizing methods of teaching safety; and the third is a psychological research into the question of how far there is danger of developing a fear-complex in the child and into the more general question of the

relative desirability of positive and negative methods of approach in this field.

For those who are uninformed it may be stated that the work of introducing safety education into the schools is now so well under way that it is safe to predict that the subject will eventually, or even shortly, find a place in the curriculum of every progressive school, and this research has been undertaken, and other researches will be undertaken in the future. In order to make sure that the work is done along fundamentally right lines.

Applications should be sent to Albert W. Whitney, associate general manager and actuary, National Bureau of Casualty and Surety Underwriters, 120 West 42d Street, New York City, and should be accompanied by pertinent information with regard to the experience and purposes of the applicant, references and, what is particularly important, a detailed plan of how he would propose to go to work to solve that one of the three problems listed in which he is particularly interested. The applicant should also state at what university he would prefer to carry on his studies. Mature students who have had some years of teaching experience are desired and it is presumed that students will wish to offer the result of the research as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

PUBLIC RECREATION—A TWENTIETH CENTURY PRODUCT

The cities of America which provide space and leadership for the play of their people have grown from fourteen or less, at the beginning of 1900, to 711, at the beginning of 1925. This quarter century has marked the acceptance of public play as a department of municipal government and a new civic science. Cities first opened children's playgrounds as a philanthropic experiment. Today a community's provision for the recreation of its citizens, young

and old, is an important index of its progress and its livableness, says the 1924 Year Book of the Playground and Recreation Association of America.

EXPENDITURE TELLS THE STORY

The annual increases in the funds spent by cities for public recreation are an effective record of the progress of the movement. This record goes back to 1907, the year after the national Association was organized. Slightly less than one million dollars was reported spent in 1907. Expenditures have thereafter shown a definite upward curve, though during a few years, they have fallen below the mark of the previous year. The greatest fluctuations were during the war period, from 1913 to 1918, when there was a drop of about three-quarters of a million dollars. In 1918, steady annual increase began. The 1924 expenditure was reported at \$20,052,558. The gain from 1922 through 1924, a matter of nearly eleven millions, is more than the gain from the beginning of the play movement up to 1922, when \$9,317,048 was reported.

Eight thousand, one hundred and fifteen refreshing centers of public play are now scattered through America, according to the 1924 reports. These recreation areas include outdoor playgrounds, indoor recreation centers and athletic fields of various types. Six hundred and thirty-five of them were opened for the first time in 1924.

Especially encouraging is the increase in leadership, the factor all-important to the success of a public recreation program. During 1924, 15,871 workers were employed, 2,783 of them the year round. This is an increase of 3,589 over the workers reported for 1923.

AMATEURS IN THE GAME

America got into the game during 1924 with 33,051 teams of amateur athletes and

17,492,751 spectators at public sports, the Year Book shows. These statistics cover ten sports—baseball, football, soccer, basketball, volley ball, dodge ball, kitten ball, playground ball, quoits and bowling, as promoted under leadership by public recreation agencies. The ratio of players to onlookers indicates that public recreation is dealing a telling blow to that national menace which has been dubbed "spectatoritis." More and more Americans are getting their recreation at first hand instead of watching others play.

Municipal golf was provided by ninety-five cities, which maintained 131 public courses. California leads in the number of cities that have put the ancient Scotch game within the reach of all their citizens. Following California's record of nine such cities are Illinois, Michigan and Ohio, each of which report seven such cities.

The municipal vacation is a new development. Eighty-three cities now maintain 123 summer camps, some for boys and girls, some where entire families may enjoy healthful diversion at a nominal charge. Bathing beaches and other places for water sports were reported by 215 cities and totalled 458. In addition, 272 cities reported 626 public swimming pools.

Cities are regarding their expenditures for public recreation as an investment, says the Year Book. They are finding that municipal play reduces street accidents to children, improves health, lessens crime and delinquency, and both attracts and holds residents and industries. Though the public recreation movement has gathered considerable momentum, the need for pioneer work with towns and cities is still urgent and wide-spread. Behind the movement is the Playground and Recreation Association of America. Last year the Association, through the visits of its field workers, gave significant aid to 318 cities and, through its correspondence service, answered 19,000 inquiries.

FEWER AND BETTER HIGH SCHOOLS

Three hundred and fifty-nine public accredited four-year high schools in the counties and cities of Virginia are shown in the tabulations of M. L. Combs, State Supervisor of Secondary Schools, as submitted to State Superintendent Harris Hart today. Altogether there are a few less accredited four-year high schools this session than last year, due in part to a change in the system of accrediting such schools.

Under the present plan of administering high school standards no school can qualify for accredited rating until it has maintained proper standards for at least two successive years. The purpose of this policy, it is pointed out, is to serve to safeguard turning out graduates from accredited schools of less than the usual standard training. On that account this session only three schools were added to the accredited list, whereas last year many schools were added to the list of accredited high schools. The schools added this year were Manchester district high school in Chesterfield county, Tappahannock high school in Essex county, and the Harrison high school for colored pupils in the city of Roanoke. The schools in both Chesterfield and Essex counties represent consolidations of previously accredited schools.

Altogether sixteen schools failing to meet the present standards were dropped from the list this year. These are distributed among twelve counties of the State, Accomac, Augusta, Charles City, Chesterfield, Essex, Fauquier, Matthews, Middlesex, Northampton, Prince William, Rockbridge, York.

Next year a considerable number of high schools will be added to the accredited list after having met the prescribed standards for at least two years.

It is explained at the State Department of Education that schools are accredited for but one year at a time, it being necessary

that each school maintain minimum standards year by year in order to appear on the official list of accredited schools.

The colleges of the State, and of the country generally, are insisting that applicants for admission be graduates of accredited schools meeting the full requirements for this rating. On that account it is significant both to the pupils and to the colleges concerned that the standards be maintained on as high a level as conditions at the present time will permit.

It is evident from prevailing tendencies in secondary education, according to State officials, that the general insistence upon a higher quality of instruction in the high schools of the country will necessitate better prepared teachers, better equipment, and larger enrollments in the individual schools. It is said to be less expensive and eminently more satisfactory to maintain fewer and better high schools. Whereas consolidation of elementary schools will secure better educational results, there is often little financial saving through consolidation. This, however, is not true of high schools. With them consolidation usually results in striking financial economies as well as decidedly better educational returns.

BOOKS

THE JOB SHEET METHOD INVADES THE TEACHER TRAINING FIELD

PROBLEMS IN THE TEACHING OF ARITHMETIC, by F. B. Knight, E. M. Luse, and G. M. Ruch. Iowa City, Iowa: Iowa Supply Co. 1924. \$1.25.

This syllabus on the teaching of arithmetic is destined to a wide use in teacher training institutions, for it is in line with a number of present-day tendencies. Consisting as it does of a series of "job sheets," it savors of the project method. These sheets stimulate the student to investigation; they enable him to check on his own results; and they offer a core for group or class discussion.

We are hearing much today of the pro-